

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 11, 2023

The Honorable President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

Thank you for your Administration's efforts to support communities across the country as they address the humanitarian needs of migrant families and individuals entering the United States. We write to urge your continued support by expediting the release of the remaining funds from the Shelter and Services Program (SSP), which will provide critical support to interior cities, like Denver, that are experiencing another influx of migrant arrivals in recent days.

Starting in December 2022, Colorado saw a surge of migrants and asylum seekers. While state and local officials have done a commendable job in welcoming these individuals by providing food, shelter, health services, transportation, and other social services, their arrival put a strain on limited state and local resources. As we near the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency, we urge your Administration to continue working with all levels of government, including the U.S. Congress, as well as state and local leaders, to coordinate further support and prepare for the possibility of additional arrivals. We also urge you to continue to provide updates to migrants and asylum seekers on the many legal pathways the Department of Homeland Security has announced that should be used for entry and processing.

To date, Colorado has spent \$8.35 million while Denver has spent more than \$14 million to feed, shelter, and care for more than 7,000 migrants. Since Colorado is closer to the border than many other final destinations, our community is already seeing an increase in new arrivals. In fact, Denver has welcomed more than 200 migrants daily since May 4, 2023, with nearly 400 arriving on May 9, 2023. Additionally, the number of people using local shelters has doubled compared to the previous week.

We appreciate the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) recent announcement on the allocation of funds for the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the City and County of Denver through the Emergency Food and Shelter Program – Humanitarian (EFSP-H) program.<sup>1</sup> Also, we strongly agree that any subsequent round of funding from FEMA must be “focused on the needs of interior cities.”

To avoid further strain on state and local resources because of proper humanitarian support being provided to new arrivals, it is vital that future rounds of funding are robust for both interior and border communities—to at minimum reimburse communities such as Denver for the full cost of expenses incurred while responding to the influx of migrants. In addition, we ask that future

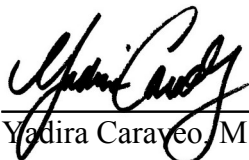
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fema.gov/grants/emergency-food-and-shelter-program/humanitarian-awards>

funding be made available expeditiously and with maximum flexibility for affected towns and communities whose financial obligations may include administrative costs, such as staffing. This will better support our state and local governments as well as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that are on the frontlines of caring for the arriving migrants.

Thank you again for your Administration's ongoing attention to and consideration of our requests. We stand ready to work with you in the best interest of Coloradans on these crucial matters, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



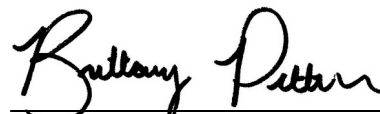
Yadira Caraveo, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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CC:

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, Department of Homeland Security  
Administrator Deanne Criswell, Federal Emergency Management Agency